



Rhode Island Department of Revenue

Division of Taxation

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TAX ADMINISTRATION

ADVISORY FOR TAX PROFESSIONALS
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Taxpayers warned about scam that has returned to Rhode Island *Caller claims to be from Rhode Island Division of Taxation, invites return calls*

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – The Rhode Island Tax Administrator today reminded taxpayers, businesses, and tax professionals to be on guard against a scam from someone who calls on the phone, claiming to be from the Rhode Island Division of Taxation.

In one version of the scam, the caller tells those answering the phone that they must call a certain phone number. At that point, a request is made for the person's money, personal information, home access, or some combination. "Taxpayers – including individuals and businesses – need to be aware that this sort of phone call is a scam," said Rhode Island Tax Administrator Neena Savage. "The caller, under false pretenses, probably wants to gain access to your home or your office to obtain personal information, money, or both," she said.

"If you receive this sort of call, don't provide any information. Write down the caller's name and contact information, if available. Then hang up and contact the appropriate agency to let them know what happened," Savage said.

"If you receive this sort of call through a recorded message – either the call itself is a pre-recorded message, or a message is left on your voicemail – do not respond to it," she said. At least two Rhode Islanders recently contacted Rhode Island Attorney General Peter Neronha's Consumer Protection Unit about the scam.

Although the scam itself is not new, the latest calls serve as a reminder for individuals and businesses to be vigilant, Savage said.

In another version of the scam, people leave you a voicemail indicating that they are from the Rhode Island Division of Taxation calling about a problem with your tax return. They then request that you call them back immediately. Never return such a phone call with either the phone number that appears on the caller ID or the phone number left on the voicemail, Savage said.

"If someone calls out of the blue, claiming to be from the Rhode Island Division of Taxation, simply hang up. If you receive a voicemail out of the blue from someone claiming to be from the Rhode Island Division of Taxation, do not call them back," Savage said.

"The caller, under false pretenses, probably wants to gain access to your home or your office to obtain personal information, money, or both."

– Tax Administrator Neena Savage

Report the scam to the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Unit by calling (401) 274-4400 or emailing: consumers@riag.ri.gov. (Alerting the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Unit when the scam is in the area will help the agency warn others.)

The Tax Administrator asks individuals and businesses to keep the following points in mind:

The Rhode Island Division of Taxation makes its first contact with a taxpayer by mail – not by phone, email, or social media.

The Rhode Island Division of Taxation does not conduct audits or examinations at your personal residence (unless it's registered with the Division as a *bona fide* business address). Also, all Rhode Island Division of Taxation employees have picture IDs.

“Also remember that the Rhode Island Division of Taxation will never demand immediate payment, will never threaten you, and will always make first contact with a taxpayer by U.S. mail, never by phone, email or social media,” she said. Those who feel they have encountered a scam involving taxes may call the following:

- The Rhode Island Attorney General's Office at (401) 274-4400.
- The Rhode Island State Police at (401) 444-1000.
- The Rhode Island Division of Taxation at (401) 574-8829. (The line is typically staffed from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. business days.)

Keep in mind . . .

- The Rhode Island Division of Taxation will not threaten you with jail over the telephone.
- The Rhode Island Division of Taxation first contacts people by mail -- not by phone -- about unpaid taxes.
- The Rhode Island Division of Taxation will not phone you to ask for payment using a prepaid debit card, a money order, or wire transfer.
- The Rhode Island Division of Taxation will not ask for a credit card number over the phone.
- The Rhode Island Division of Taxation will not call you to ask for your Social Security number over the phone.

The Rhode Island Division of Taxation office is located at One Capitol Hill in Providence, R.I., diagonally across from the Smith Street entrance to the State House, and is open to the public from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. business days. For more information, contact the Division of Taxation at (401) 574-8829 or click [here](#).
